

## Message Text

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ORIGIN PA-02

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 PRS-01 SSO-00 CCO-00 /019 R

DRAFTED BY PA/M:REBUTLER:REB  
APPROVED BY PA/M:CWFREEMAN,JR.  
S/S-O - MR. GOLDSMITH  
DESIRED DISTRIBUTION  
PA, S/S, S/PRS

-----085064 201843Z /64

P 201810Z JAN 78 ZFF4  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 016182 TOSEC 010122

FOR CARTER FROM PA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT EVANS AND NOVAK COLUMN OP-ED PAGE  
WASHINGTON POST FRIDAY JANUARY 20 HEADED "THE SAME OLD  
BEGIN."

2. EXACTLY ONE MONTH BEFORE EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT ANWAR  
SADAT CALLED HIS ENVOYS BACK TO CAIRO TO HALT THE JERU-  
SALEM PEACE TALKS, THE WARNING THAT FAILURE LOOMED WAS  
SOUNDED DURING ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER MENAHEM BEGIN'S  
VISIT TO WASHINGTON.

3. THE WARNING TOOK THIS FORM: AN EXTREMELY CLEVER  
AND LARGELY SUCCESSFUL POLITICAL PLOY BY BEGIN DURING  
HIS DEC. 16 TRIP HERE TO SHOW THAT HE HAD WON PRESIDENT  
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CARTER'S TOTAL SUPPORT FOR THE ISRAELI RESPONSE TO  
SADAT.

4. THAT SET OFF ALARM BELLS THAT THE PRESIDENT MUTED  
IN HOPES OF AN INTERVENING MIRACLE. HIS HOPE: THAT  
THE OLD MILITANT ZIONIST MENAHEM BEGIN, ACHIEVING  
POWER LATE IN LIFE, HAD BECOME A CRUSADER FOR PEACE.

EVENTS SINCE THEN SUGGEST THAT, WHETHER BECAUSE OF

DOMESTIC POLITICS, INFLEXIBILITY OR ULTERIOR MOTIVE, HE IS THE SAME OLD BEGIN.

5. AFTER LONG TALKS WITH CARTER A MONTH AGO, BEGIN ADDRESSED HIS PARLIAMENT DEC. 28. IN THAT SPEECH, HE REFERRED TO THE AMERICAN LEADERS "WHO PRAISED OUR PEACE PLAN AS FAIR, AS CONSTRUCTIVE, AS A BREAKTHROUGH." HE CLAIMED THE "MASSIVE MORAL SUPPORT" OF THE ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS IN BOTH PARTIES.

6. CARTER WAS PRESSED HARD BY BEGIN TO GIVE JUST SUCH A GLORIOUS--THOUGH UNREALISTIC--APPRAISAL OF BEGIN'S PEACE PLAN. THE PRESIDENT WISELY REFUSED.

7. INSTEAD, DEEPLY DISAPPOINTED BY WHAT BEGIN WAS OFFERING SADAT, CARTER ACTUALLY GAVE THE LOWEST POSSIBLE RESPONSE HE COULD CONCEIVE: BEGIN'S PLAN WAS A "CONSTRUCTIVE" START FOR NEGOTIATIONS. THE STATE DEPARTMENT LATER PASSED WORD TO ITS DIPLOMATS THAT THE ISRAELI OFFER RESPONDING TO SADAT'S COURAGEOUS TRIP TO JERUSALEM SHOULD BE DESCRIBED AS "A GOOD BEGINNING."

8. THUS WAS CARTER SERVED NOTICE OF WHAT BEGIN INTENDED. BEGIN'S "GOOD BEGINNING" WAS ALSO HIS END--  
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POSITIONS ADHERED TO EVER SINCE AND WITH A RISING HARSHNESS OF RHETORIC.

9. BEGIN'S HARSH WORDS TRANSFORMED SADAT'S DREAM FOR A QUICK, SWEEPING PEACE INTO A NIGHTMARE OF HAGGLING OVER PROCEDURES, FORMULAS AND AGENDAS. IT WAS SADAT'S HOPE TO ESCAPE SUCH TORTUOUS NEGOTIATING TACTICS THAT DROVE HIM TO JERUSALEM.

10. NO CARTER ADMINISTRATION EXPERT UNDERESTIMATES BEGIN'S POLITICAL PROBLEMS WITHIN HIS OWN HAWKISH HERUT PARTY, THE MAIN COMPONENT OF ISRAEL'S GOVERNING COALITION. SUGGESTING EVEN MODEST CONCESSIONS TO SADAT LOST BEGIN A LONG-TIME POLITICAL INTIMATE, SHMUEL KATZ, AND SACRIFICED SUPPORT FROM THE FANATICAL RELIGIOUS GROUP CALLED GUSH EMUNIM AND SOME RELIGIOUS FACTIONS IN PARLIAMENT.

11. NEVERTHELESS, U.S. OFFICIALS RECENTLY STARTED WORRYING THAT BEGIN WAS USING THESE POTENTIALLY SERIOUS CRACKS IN HIS POLITICAL ALLIANCE AS A PRETEXT FOR INEXCUSABLE NEGOTIATING POSITIONS.

12. SOME OFFICIALS HERE WERE ANGERED BY BEGIN'S  
HARD STATEMENT EARLY THIS WEEK THAT ISRAEL WOULD NEVER

YIELD ON JEWISH "SETTLEMENTS"--ACTUALLY GOOD-SIZED  
TOWNS--IN THE EGYPTIAN SINAI CONQUERED BY ISRAEL IN  
1967. SUCH A SLAP IN SADAT'S FACE WAS PERCEIVED BY  
THEM AS A CALCULATED HUMILIATION OF SADAT. OTHER  
OFFICIALS FELT IT ALSO MEANT BEGIN FEARED TO PER-  
SUADE HIS COUNTRY TO ACCEPT THE KIND OF PEACE SADAT  
OFFERED AND DELIBERATELY COURTED FAILURE.

13. THIS VIEW WAS STRENGTHENED WHEN BEGIN DELIVERED  
HIS INSENSITIVE TOAST AT THE JAN. 27 STATE DINNER IN  
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JERUSALEM FOR THE EGYPTIAN PEACE DELEGATION. IT WAS THE  
SECOND TIME BEGIN HAD USED A FORMAL SOCIAL OCCASION TO  
COMPARE THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION (ENTIRELY  
CUT OUT OF THE CURRENT TALKS) TO "NAZI MURDERERS." IT  
SEEMED DELIBERATELY INTENDED TO AFFRONT THE EGYPTIANS.

14. SUCH LANGUAGE ADDED TO GROWING SIGNALS THAT BEGIN  
WAS COURTING FAILURE IN THE MOST HOPEFUL PEACE OPPOR-  
TUNITY EVER OFFERED SINCE THE BIRTH OF ISRAEL.

15. AN EARLIER SIGN WAS BEGIN'S INSISTENCE ON CALLING  
THE WEST BANK OF PALESTINE BY THE BIBLICAL NAMES  
"SAMARIA" AND "JUDEA"--THEREBY CLAIMING ITS HISTORICAL  
LINK TO ISRAEL--IN WRITING THE AGENDA FOR THE JERUSALEM  
TALKS. ONLY A THREAT BY CARTER TO BOYCOTT THE TALKS  
BROUGHT BEGIN AROUND, PERMITTING AN AGENDA TO BE IN-  
SCRIBED.

16. FOR SADAT, THE JERUSALEM BREAKUP HOLDS UNKNOWN  
DANGERS OF AWESOME DIMENSION. BUT FOR BEGIN IT POSES  
AT LEAST A SLIM POSSIBILITY THAT THE 30-YEAR LOVE  
AFFAIR BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND ISRAEL WILL ENTER  
A SLIGHT COOLING PERIOD. THAT DANGER MIGHT GIVE  
SOPHISTICATED JEWISH LEADERS AND PRO-ISRAELI POLITI-  
CIANS HERE A CHANCE TO CONVINCE BEGIN THAT SADAT'S  
DIPLOMATIC DEMANDS DO NOT CARRY SUCH FEARSOME DANGERS  
FOR ISRAEL'S SECURITY.

17. REP. CLEMENT ZABLOCKI (D-WIS.) WHO AS CHAIRMAN OF  
THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE HAS NEVER  
DEVIATED FROM SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL, CONFIDED TO AN  
ISRAELI OFFICIAL IN JERUSALEM THIS WEEK, "ISRAEL HAS  
NOT YET RESPONDED TO SADAT." NOW, FOR THE TIME BEING  
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AT LEAST, THERE IS NOTHING LEFT TO RESPOND TO. END  
TEXT. CHRISTOPHER

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, TOSEC  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:**  
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**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Executive Order:** N/A  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014